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Message Text

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43
ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 AID-05

IO-10 /065 W
---------- 010648
R 041129Z MAR 75
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2319

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E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: PINT, CE
SUBJ: J.R. JAYEWARDENE TO RESING SEAT

1. OPPOSITION UNITED NATIONAL PARTY (UNP) DELEGATES IN SPECIAL SESSION MARCH 1 FORMALLY SUPPORTED OPPOSITION LEADER J.R. HAYERARDENE'S DECISION TO RESIGN HIS NATIONAL STATE ASSEMBLY SEAT PRIOR TO MAY 27, 1975, FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF LAST GENERAL ELECTION. DELEGATES ALSO AGREED THAT UNP PARLIAMENTARY GROUP WOULD OBEY ANY DECISION BY JAYEWARDENE REGARDING RESIGNATION OF OTHER UNP MPS. J.R. IN TURN PLEDGED TO SURRENDER PARTY LEADERS IF GENERAL ELECTION WAS NOT CALLED BY END OF 1975.

2. THIS IS LATEST GAMBIT IN JAYEWARDENE'S EFFORTS TO FORCE GENERAL ELECTIONS IN 1975. HE MOOTED LONG-ANTICIPATED PLAN TO RESIGN IN SEVERAL SPEECHES IN EARLY FEBRUARY. RUMOR THAT ALLUNP MPS WOULD RESIGN EN MASSE WAS FOLLOWED BY PROPOSAL OF STAGGERED RESIGNATIONS OF OPPSOITION MPS TO FORCE LONG SERIES OF BY-ELECTIONS WHICH UNP HOPES TO WIN BY LARGE MARGINS AND THEREBY EMBARRASS RULING UNITED FRONT (UF) COALITION. JAYEWARDENE HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO POINT OUT THAT RESIGNATIN WOULD NOT QUESTION VALIDITY OF 1972 CONSTITUTION IN ORDER TO SIDESTEP EMERGENCY REGULATION (COLOMBO 3537, DECEMBER 24, 1974). RATHER HE CLAIMS MPS
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ARE MORALLY BOUND TO RENEW FIVE-YEAR MANDATE THEY RECEIVED

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FROM VOTERS IN 1970. WHAT PRIME MINISTER'S COUNTERACATION MIGHT BE IS UNCLEAR BUT GOVERNMENT HAS PREMITTED JAYEWARDENE'S PLAN WIDE PUBLICITY IN CONTROLLED PRESS. SEVERAL UF MPS ARE URGING PRIME MINISTER NOT TO SCHEDULE BY-ELCTION, AND RUMORS OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO PROHIBIT MP RESIGNING UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES FROM STAND-ING FOR TEN YEARS ARE PLENTIFUL. JAYEWARDENE ASSOCITATE THODL EMBOFF THAT J.R. IS CONFIDENT BY-ELECTION WILL BE STAGED IF PM IS ASSURED MOST UNP MPS WILL NOT RESIGN SEATS. AT THIS TIME PROSPECT GOOD THAT ONLY JAYEWARDENE AND PERHPAS ONE OR TWO OTHERS WILL RESIGN, BUT FORMULATION OF NEXT STEP IN UNP STRATEGY MAY AWAIT MEASRUEMENT OF UF REACTION TO LATEST UNP INITIATIVE.
VAN HOLLEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
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Draft Date: 04 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Authority: woolflhd
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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